



New Hampshire CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES



*Supporting Families
with Children*



Your Child Support Dictionary

ARREARAGES – Child support that was not paid when due

CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES – A calculation table available on the DCSS website, which provides guideline support amounts based upon income and expenses of both parents

CHILD SUPPORT ORDER – A court or administrative order for the amount of child and medical support to be paid

CHILD SUPPORT – A way for parents to share the responsibility of providing financial and medical support for their child

CURRENT SUPPORT – The ongoing dollar amount to be paid as stated in a legal order

DCSS – Division of Child Support Services

DEBIT CARD – A NH Child Support Debit Card issued to payees by a DCSS vendor as one of two methods to disburse payments

DHHS – Department of Health and Human Services

EFT – Electronic Fund Transfer, also known as Direct Deposit as one of two methods to disburse payments

HEALTHY KIDS GOLD – (Medicaid) Provides many health and dental services for children and teens at no cost to the family

INTERSTATE CASE – A case in which DCSS works with another state child support agency to establish or enforce a court order when a parent responsible for paying child support resides in another state

LIEN – A legal claim against personal or real property to pay child support arrearages

MEDICAID – State health care assistance

MEDICAL SUPPORT ORDER – A court or administrative order to provide health insurance, and/or an on-going monetary sum toward health care costs for dependent children

PATERNITY TEST – Genetic test to determine the biological father of a child

PAYEE – The person that receives child support payments

PAYOR – The person responsible for paying child support

REASONABLE COST OF MEDICAL SUPPORT – NH-state law defines as 4% of a parent's gross income

SDU – State Disbursement Unit which receives, records and disburses child support payments to a payee

TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Cash Assistance)

Introduction

This brochure explains child support services. These services are available even if one of the parents lives in another state, and include:

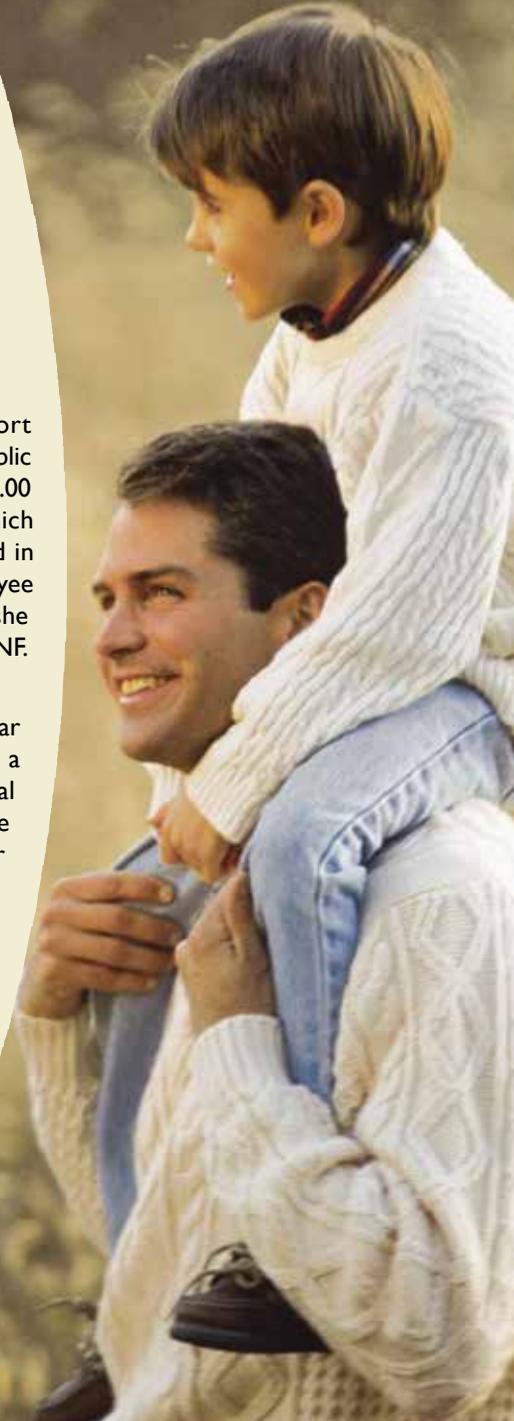
- Locating a responsible parent
- Determining paternity for a child
- Establishing and enforcing a financial and medical child support order
- Collecting, distributing, and monitoring child support payments
- Reviewing an order to see if it continues to meet guideline amounts

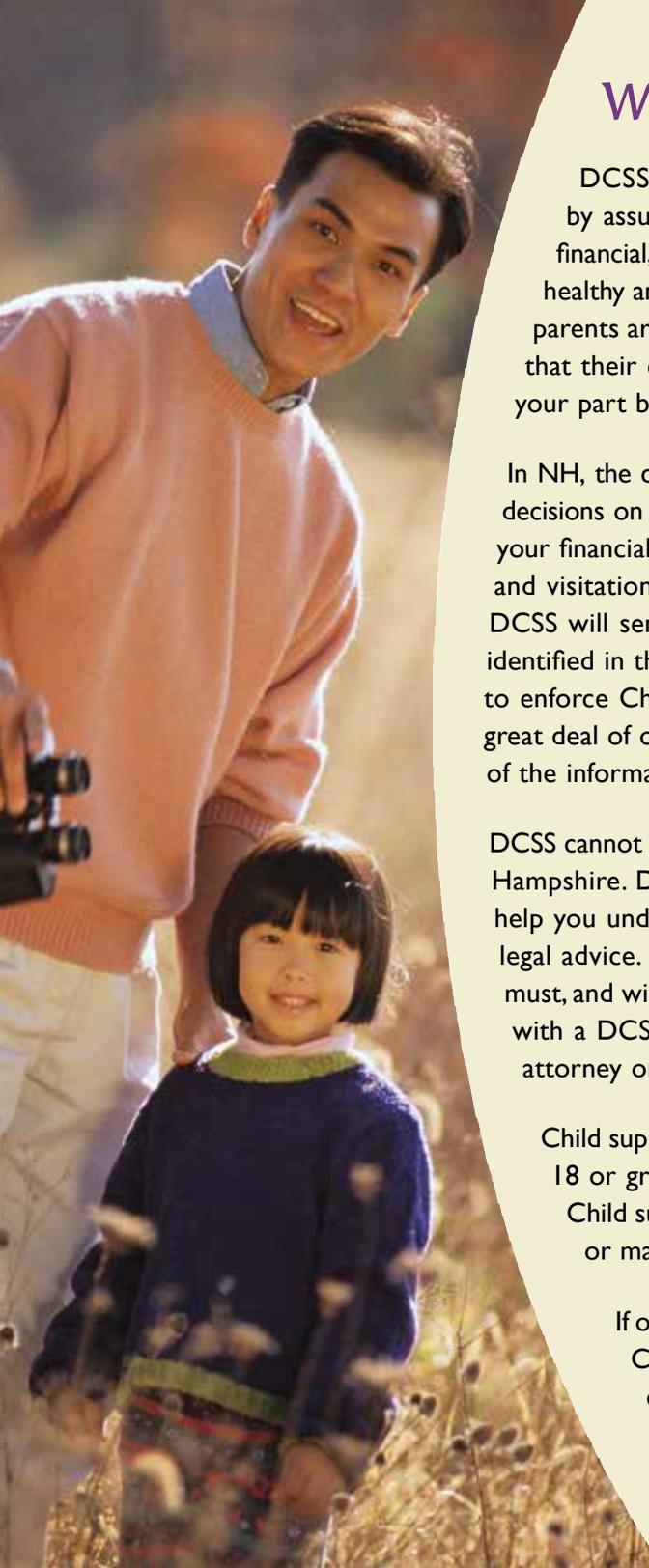
A \$25.00 annual service fee will be deducted from child support collected on behalf of all dependents who have never received Public Assistance (TANF). The fee is only charged after a minimum of \$500.00 has been collected and disbursed. If a payee has multiple cases in which the dependents have never received TANF, the fee will be charged in each of those cases with at least \$500.00 in disbursements. If a payee has received TANF from another State or tribal jurisdiction he or she must inform DCSS and provide proof of his or her receipt of TANF. DCSS will not charge that payee a \$25 annual service fee.

The fee is assessed each year during the federal fiscal year (not calendar year), which runs from October 1 to September 30. If a payee paid a fee to another State or tribal jurisdiction in the current federal fiscal year he or she must inform DCSS and provide proof of his or her fee payment. DCSS will not charge the payee a \$25 annual service fee for the current federal fiscal year.

According to federal and state law, DCSS may charge fees for any of the services it provides, for example, services related to payment processing, case maintenance, IRS intercept, and/or the establishment or enforcement of court orders, etc. For more information regarding DCSS service-related fees, visit the DCSS website at: www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcscs. TANF recipients are required to cooperate with Child Support to establish or enforce an order for child support.

All cases administered by DCSS must contain a provision for medical support. Medical support is the obligation of either or both parents to provide health insurance and/or cash medical support for their dependents when available at reasonable cost.



A photograph of a man and a young girl standing in a field of tall, golden grass. The man, on the left, is wearing a light pink sweater over a light blue collared shirt and is smiling warmly at the camera. The young girl, on the right, is wearing a dark blue sweater with a green collar and is also smiling. The background is a soft-focus field of grass under a bright sky.

What to Expect

DCSS strives to enhance the well being of children by assuring that they can count on their parents for the financial, medical, and emotional support they need to be healthy and successful. DCSS will work to ensure that both parents are treated fairly, kept informed as appropriate, and that their concerns are recognized. As parents, you can do your part by treating each other and DCSS with respect.

In NH, the court establishes the child support order, including decisions on where the children will reside. DCSS will enforce your financial and medical child support order only. Custody and visitation issues are between the parents and the court. DCSS will send collected child support directly to the payee identified in the order. While DCSS will use the tools available to enforce Child Support, we may not always be successful. A great deal of our success relies upon the quality and timeliness of the information you provide to us.

DCSS cannot represent you. DCSS represents the State of New Hampshire. DCSS can explain the court process to you and help you understand the paperwork, but we cannot give you legal advice. For the most effective case management, DCSS must, and will decide what actions to take. If you do not agree with a DCSS decision, you have the right to hire your own attorney or represent yourself.

Child support is generally paid until the youngest child turns 18 or graduates from high school, whichever occurs last. Child support will also end when a child joins the military or marries.

If one parent lives in another state, the DCSS Interstate Child Support Unit may be able to work with the other state child support agency to establish and enforce a child support order.

Locating a Parent

You can help DCSS locate a parent by giving as much information as possible to your child support worker, such as:

- Name and nicknames
- Social Security Number and date of birth
- Previous addresses
- Bank and credit union accounts
- Names and addresses of family, friends, and current or previous employers
- Property and assets such as cars (make, model, color, year, license plate state and number), land, houses, boats, snowmobiles, business property and equipment, and other valuables

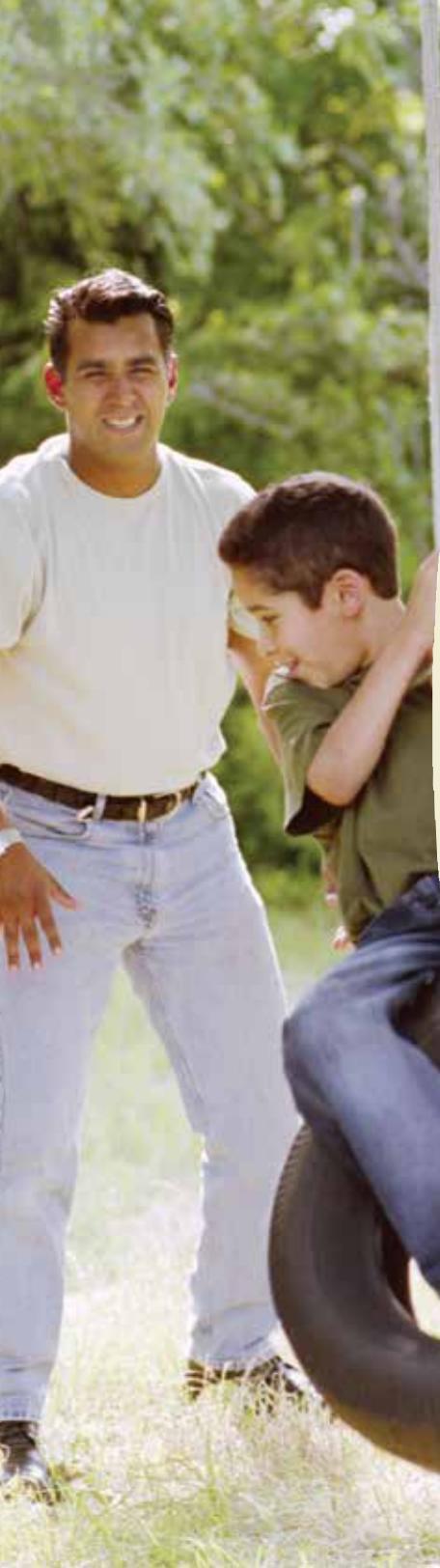
Some of the information above can be found on old income tax returns, bank statements, paycheck stubs, insurance forms, union membership cards, driver's licenses, and loan or credit card applications or statements.

Determining Paternity

DCSS must know who the child's father is in order to establish a support order. If the parents were not married at the time of the child's birth, paternity should be established as early as possible. By establishing paternity your child benefits:

- Financially, through qualifying for child support, certain disability benefits, and inheritance rights
- Medically, through rights to the father's health insurance benefits and information about his health
- Emotionally, through a sense of identity and security





To determine paternity, DCSS will need information about the child's father and the relationship between the parents at the time of the child's conception or birth.

If paternity is not recorded on a birth certificate, DCSS will have to prove paternity and may use genetic testing to do so. If genetic testing is needed, both parents and the child will need to be tested to accurately determine paternity. Testing involves a sample of DNA from the mouth area of both parents and the child using a cotton swab. The test is done by medical professionals and is painless.

Paternity Determination without the court - When the child's parents are unmarried and want to legally establish paternity they can do so in court or they can complete an Affidavit of Paternity. The Affidavit of Paternity is a simple way for unmarried parents to establish paternity for their child. For more information contact any birthing hospital, town or city clerk's office or a DCSS District Office.

Establishing an Order

Once paternity is determined, DCSS will work to establish a legal order for support in court. The amount of the court order is based on both parents' income, ability to pay, and access to health insurance for your child.

When establishing an order for the first time, be sure to bring your Social Security Number, your child's birth certificate, and all available income and medical information for both parents.

Usually, when a court order is established, one parent will be required to pay child support in the amount and frequency stated in the order. DCSS sends collected child support payments to the payee within two business days of receiving the payment.

CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES

The amount of current child support owed is calculated in accordance with the New Hampshire Child Support Guidelines, which are set by state law. The court will order this amount, unless the court finds that the amount would be unjust or inappropriate due to special circumstances. If you believe you have circumstances that would support an amount different from the Guideline amount, be certain to bring supporting documentation to the court hearing.

Enforcing an Order

Most child support payments are paid through income assignment where a portion of the payor's paycheck is withheld and sent to the DCSS State Disbursement Unit (SDU). The SDU processes and sends the money to the payee electronically by one of the following two options: 1) direct deposit into payee's bank account (checking or savings account), or 2) direct deposit to a Debit Card account provided to the payee by a DCSS-contracted vendor. When a case opens for enforcement, the vendor will provide the payee information regarding these options and include an enrollment form so that s/he can select a preferred option. Failure to return the enrollment form within 30 days will default to payment disbursement by Debit Card. When payments are not paid, are not paid on time, or are not paid in full (according to the court order), DCSS may take enforcement action. It is important that you understand that DCSS or the court, *not* the payee, decides the type and level of enforcement action.

To enforce payment of arrearages, DCSS may:

File Liens against a payor's Personal & Real Property

– Includes financial accounts, real estate holdings, personal possessions of value, etc.

Intercept a payor's Tax Refunds – Tax return money is sent directly to DCSS for appropriate disbursement

Inform Credit Bureaus – Provide the amount of the arrearages to credit bureaus

Take a portion of a payor's Unemployment Compensation Benefits

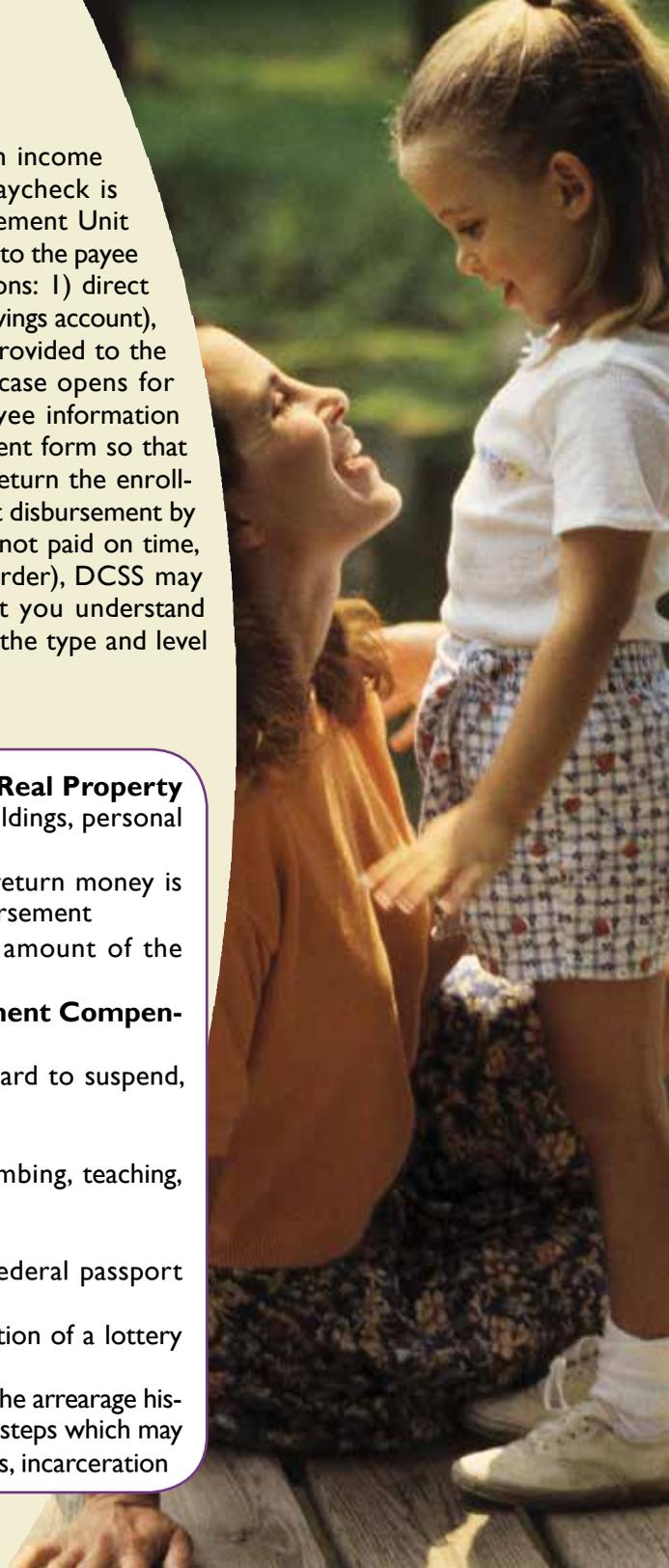
Suspend a License – Notify a licensing board to suspend, deny, or take back a payor's license, including:

- Driver's
- Occupational/Professional (medical, plumbing, teaching, cosmetology, etc)
- Sporting (hunting and fishing)

Request Passport Denial – Notify the federal passport agency to deny issuing a passport

Intercept Lottery Prizes – Take the portion of a lottery prize equal to the amount of the arrearage

Schedule a Court Hearing – DCSS presents the arrearage history to the court for the judge to decide next steps which may include immediate payment or, in certain cases, incarceration



A woman with dark hair, wearing a grey cardigan and blue leggings, is walking on a paved path outdoors. She is carrying a baby in a blue and red baby carrier. The background shows trees and fallen leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. The image is partially obscured by a white curved shape on the right side of the page.

Successful enforcement depends on the quality of the information available. Please promptly notify DCSS if your address or telephone changes. DCSS must be able to contact you directly to complete necessary forms or to provide information regarding payments or a child support order. You can also help by being patient as your child support worker decides and takes suitable action on your case. Limiting your calls to DCSS to those that provide updates permits your worker valuable time to work on your case. For payment information, please call the Voice Response System first at 800 371-2244, then call Customer Service or email DCSS (see “Customer Service” section). Accurate information about the payor’s address, phone number, occupation and income can all affect enforcement activity. Further, the payor’s employment status impacts the ability to pay child support. You can help DCSS enforce your order by providing new information as it becomes available.

Changing Your Order

Either parent may ask DCSS or the court to review their child support order to find out if it should be raised or lowered based on New Hampshire Guidelines. Upon written request, DCSS will review your order if:

- It has been three years since your order was issued or modified
- Either parent’s financial situation, has changed significantly since their order was issued or modified
- Medical support is not included in your current order

When modifying your order, you should bring all previous child support or divorce orders with you.

Both parents **must** provide current information about income, expenses, and health insurance or DCSS cannot review the order and recalculate the amount. If DCSS is provided with the information and determines that the order should be adjusted up or down, in accordance with the New Hampshire Guidelines, we will file the necessary papers with the court. If either parent does not agree with the new amount or fails to provide the information, either parent may go to court on their own and ask the court to change the order. Please remember that DCSS cannot represent you.

TANF and Medicaid

If you receive TANF cash assistance with Medicaid or Medicaid-Only, you must:

- **Assign your rights to child/spousal support and/or medical support.** – When you receive TANF with Medicaid, DCSS has the authority to collect and keep your support payments as reimbursement for assistance provided
- **Cooperate with DCSS** – To locate the other parent, establish paternity if not already established, and establish and enforce an order for child/medical support

Support collected (up to the amount of assistance spent) may be used by the state and federal government to repay the cash and medical assistance given to you and your child.

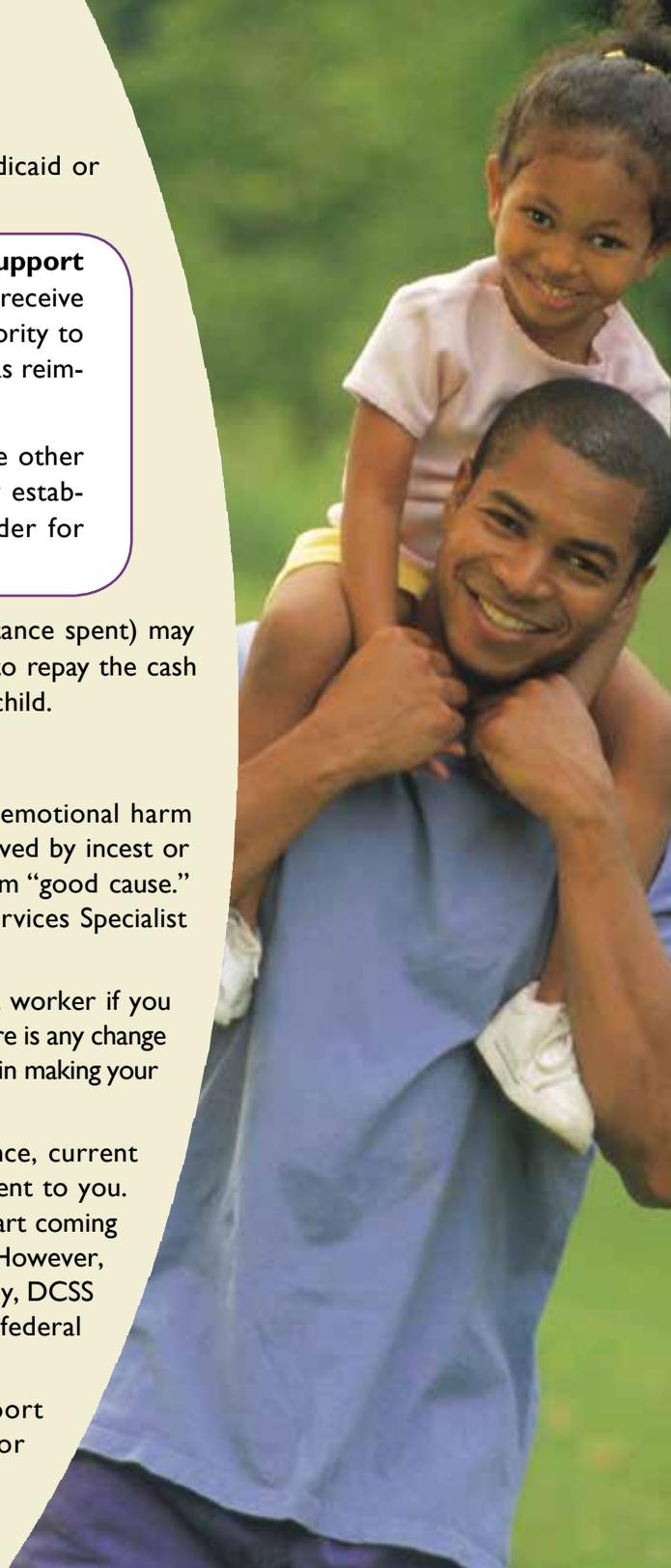
GOOD CAUSE

If working with DCSS may cause physical or emotional harm to you or your child, or your child was conceived by incest or rape, or your child was adopted, you can claim “good cause.” For more details, contact your TANF Family Services Specialist (FSS) or your child support worker.

You must tell your FSS and your child support worker if you receive support directly from the payor and if there is any change in the amount you receive. You must cooperate in making your child support payments payable through DCSS.

When you stop receiving TANF cash assistance, current support payments received by DCSS will be sent to you. It usually takes a few weeks for payments to start coming to you after your TANF case has been closed. However, even if you get current support payments directly, DCSS may continue to try to collect any state and federal assistance given to you and your child.

If you have questions about how child support payments affect your eligibility for TANF or Medicaid, contact your FSS.



A photograph of a man and a young child riding a bicycle together on a paved path. The man is in the driver's seat, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and jeans, smiling. The child is sitting on the back seat, wearing a plaid shirt and a yellow helmet, holding a colorful pinwheel. The background is a blurred green landscape with trees.

MANDATORY REVIEW

Federal regulations require DCSS review any order when financial assistance and some types of medical assistance are being provided for the child(ren) named in the order, if any of the following apply:

- It has been three years since your order was issued or modified.
- The financial situation of either party has changed significantly since your order was issued or modified (this does not apply to medical assistance cases).
- Medical support was not included in your order and the child(ren) do not have health insurance other than Medicaid, or an adjustment to the medical support order would assure that the child(ren)'s health care needs be better addressed.

DCSS will provide notice to all child support payees and payors when it determines that an order must be reviewed and will request the Payee and Payor provide current financial and/or health insurance information and participate in the review.

Customer Service

Customer Service is the central contact for DCSS. Customer Service representatives will work with you to answer case specific questions as well as general questions about the Child Support program. Their representatives are also available to update your case information, such as address or employment changes.

Customer Service representatives are available:

MONDAY through FRIDAY
from 8:00 AM to 4:15 PM at:

800 852-3345 x 4427

OR

603 271-4427 Fax 603 271-4787

Through e-mail on the DHHS Website:

www.dhhs.nh.gov/dhhs/dcss

Voice Response System

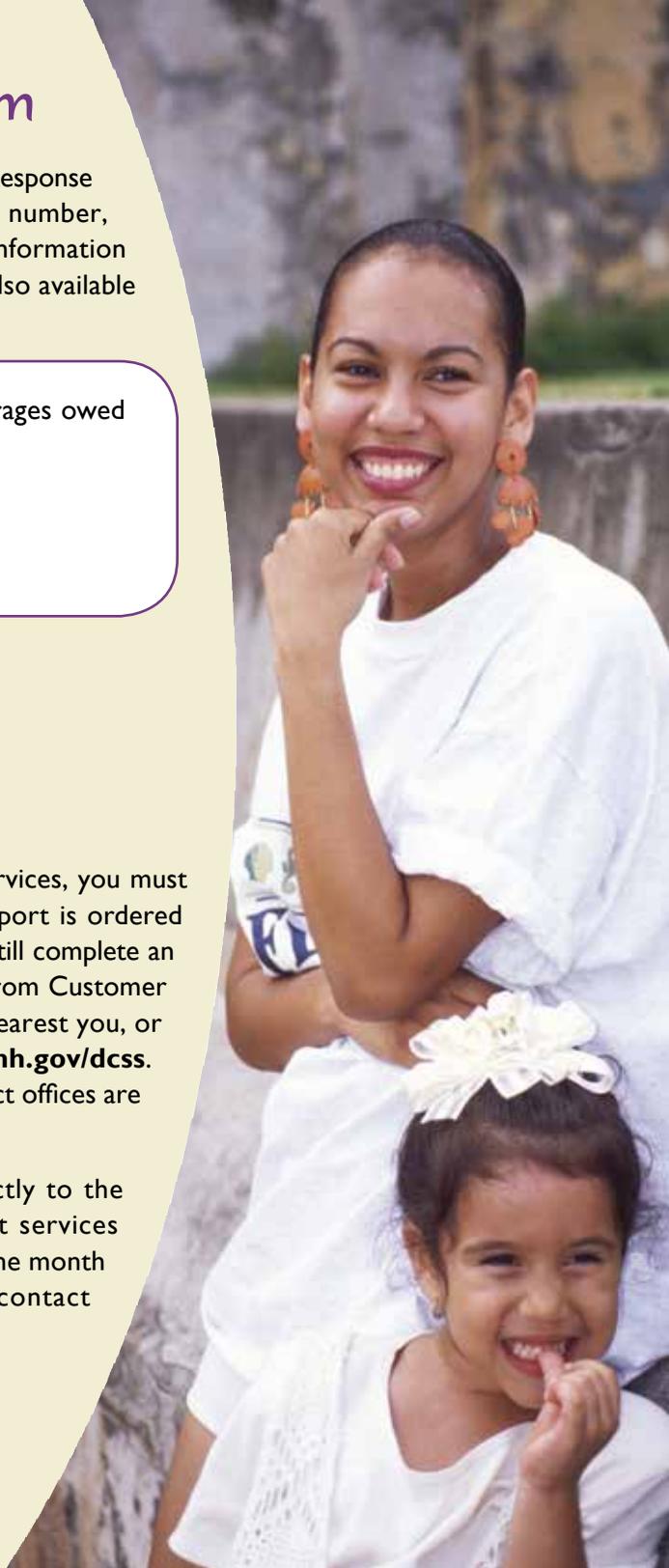
Also available is a 24 hour, 7 day a week Voice Response System at 800 371-8844. When you call this number, you will be given current and past payment information for your child support case. The information, also available in Spanish, includes:

- Last month's summary balance and arrearages owed
- Last five payments
- Last payment received
- Date of the last payment

Applying for Child Support Services

If you would like to apply for child support services, you must complete an application. Even if your child support is ordered payable through DCSS by the court, you must still complete an application to DCSS. Applications are available from Customer Service at 603 271-4427, at the district office nearest you, or by contacting DCSS by email at www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcsc. The addresses and phone numbers of the district offices are listed on the back page.

If the child support is ordered payable directly to the payee, DCSS can only provide child support services under certain circumstances, such as when a one month arrearage exists. For further information, contact DCSS Customer Service.



CHILD SUPPORT DISTRICT OFFICES

BERLIN DISTRICT OFFICE

650 MAIN ST STE 200
BERLIN NH 03570-2496
603 752-7800 or 800 972-6111
FAX 603 752-3208

CLAREMONT DISTRICT OFFICE

17 WATER ST STE 301
CLAREMONT NH 03743-2280
603 542-9544 or 800 982-1001
FAX 603 543-8918

CONCORD DISTRICT OFFICE

40 TERRILL PARK DR
CONCORD NH 03301-7325
603 271-3604 or 800 322-9191
FAX 603 271-6206

CONWAY DISTRICT OFFICE

73 HOBBS ST
CONWAY NH 03818-6188
603 447-3841 or 800 552-4628
FAX 603 447-1988

INTERSTATE OFFICE DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

129 PLEASANT ST
CONCORD NH 03301-3857
603 271-4431 or 800 852-3345 EXT. 4431
FAX 603 271-4771

KEENE DISTRICT OFFICE

111 KEY RD
KEENE NH 03431-3926
603 357-3510 or 800 624-9700
FAX 603 355-1542

LACONIA DISTRICT OFFICE

65 BEACON ST W
LACONIA NH 03247-3428
603 524-4485 or 800 322-2121
FAX 603 528-1652

LITTLETON DISTRICT OFFICE

80 N LITTLETON RD
LITTLETON NH 03561-3814
603 444-6786 or 800 552-8959
FAX 603 444-0348

MANCHESTER DISTRICT OFFICE

195 MCGREGOR ST STE 110
MANCHESTER NH 03102-3762
603 668-2330 or 800 852-7493
FAX 603 668-4218

ROCHESTER DISTRICT OFFICE

150 WAKEFIELD ST STE 22
ROCHESTER NH 03867-1309
603 332-9120 or 800 862-5300
FAX 603 332-5204

SEACOAST DISTRICT OFFICE

50 INTERNATIONAL DR
PORTSMOUTH NH 03801-2862
603 334-4323 or 800 821-0326
FAX 603 559-8495

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OFFICE

3 PINE STREET EXT STE Q
NASHUA NH 03060-3213
603 883-7726 or 800 852-0632
FAX 603 883-0528

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

129 PLEASANT ST
CONCORD NH 03301-3857
603 271-4427 or 800 852-3345 Ext. 4427
FAX 603 271-4787

www.dhhs.nh.gov/dhhs/dcsc

